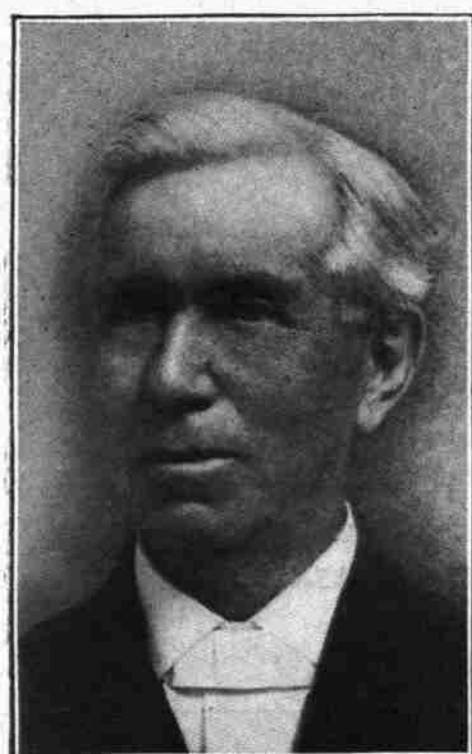


Bible Study at Benedict College

Rev. A. C. Osborn, D.D., LL.D.

President Benedict College, Columbia, S. C.
At Clifton Conference, August 19, 1908

FIRST, a few words with regard to Bible work. The student in our institution is put to studying the Bible. Students are examined in it, and their promotion and graduation depend upon their work and their marks in it, the same as in any other study. There is no difference whatever.



President A. C. Osborn

Every year students are refused promotion because of their low marks in Bible study, the same as in any other study. Every student in the school is asked, "Did you bring a Bible?" If not able to show this, they are requested to purchase a Bible at the same time they purchase their other books, and no student is registered who has not a Bible. They begin their course in this as in every other study at the beginning of the year.

Last year we had six hundred and sixty-six on our roll, and we have averaged nearly that for years past. There has never been a student leave the school without a Bible, and without instruction in the Bible, as in other studies. Since the foundation of the school (in 1871), there have been about seven thousand, boys and girls, men and women, that have been in the school, and every one was requested to have a Bible. The first recitation period every morning is Bible hour.

The Bible as a Regular Study

The school was built in 1871. There has never been a pupil in the school who has not been requested to take the Bible as a regular study five days in the week during their entire course. The classes are taught by the regular teacher so far as the qualifications of that teacher have been adapted to the work. It is not every teacher who makes a good Bible teacher. But with a few exceptions the teachers are the regular teachers in the school, and they have their regular class in that as in any other study. They are examined as to the result of their work.

Sunday-School Work a Required Work

Our Sunday-school work is a required work, so far as boarding students are concerned. They are all required to attend the Sunday-school. It is superintended by Professor Lee, and for several years the school was taught as a whole, simply as one class without the organization of graded classes. Three years ago, we organized a school into separate classes, precisely as a school would be organized in Sunday-school work, with infant classes and adult classes, with separate teachers, and with Professor Lee as superintendent. We endeavored to make it, so far as possible, a model Sunday-school, with a purpose of training and instructing the students as to organizing and carrying on Sunday-school work in other schools; and, as far as I have been able to decide, it is a model Sunday-school.

The teachers are not teachers in the school, but are students. There is no teacher who is an instructor in the school, except the superintendent. The purpose is, to train those students to conduct classes and to take care of the administration of the Sunday-school. They meet one evening in the week for instruction in teaching classes, and our work has been eminently satisfactory.

Sketch of Benedict College

MRS. BATHSHEBA A. BENEDICT, of Pawtucket, R. I., in 1871 gave to the American Baptist Home Mission Society of New York \$5,000 to purchase ground in Columbia, S. C., for a school for the Negroes.

On that ground was a frame building. In December, 1871, under the name of Benedict Institute, with Rev. Timothy S. Dodge as principal, a school was opened with ten students, of whom one was a boarder and nine were day students from the city of Columbia. The first school year closed with thirty-nine persons enrolled, some of whom were in the school but a few days and nearly all of whom were men and women just out of slavery, who wished to learn to read. A primer and the Bible were the chief text-books.

Principal Dodge was succeeded in 1876 by Rev. Lewis Colby. In 1879 Rev. E. J. Goodspeed, D.D., became principal and held this office until his death in 1881. For the next fourteen years Rev. Charles E. Becker was principal. For twenty-three years, from 1871 to 1894, the school, as Benedict Institute, was of the